

REMARKS

A petition for a one month extension of time has today been filed as a separate paper and a copy is attached hereto.

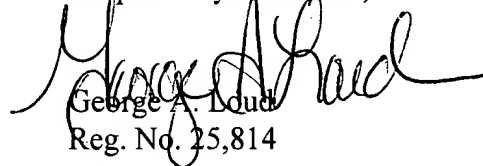
At the top of page 3 of the initial office action the examiner read both of applicants' "port door horizontal-movement mechanism" and "sensor horizontal-movement mechanism" on the same element of Bacchi et al, i.e., the port door carriage mechanism 252. In the final action of July 30, 2003 the examiner reads applicants' "sensor horizontal-movement mechanism" on scanner motor 320 of Bacchi et al which operates to pivot the two scanning fingers 292l and 292r between fully extended positions within the FOUP and fully retracted positions as described at column 8, line 65 to column 9, line 6. Claim 1 has now been amended to address the latter claim construction wherein applicants' "sensor horizontal-movement mechanism" is read on scanner motor 320. Note the following distinctions between the structure defined by claim 1 and Bacchi et al read in the manner of the final rejection. Firstly, the scanner motor 320 of Bacchi et al is mounted within the port door, not external to same. Secondly, as noted above, Bacchi et al moves his scanning fingers 292l and 292r through an arc, i.e., pivoting motion, whereas claim 1 as amended requires that the motion of the sensor bracket be both horizontal and linear. Further, while the scanner motor 320 of Bacchi et al is mounted within the port door, in applicants' invention it is necessarily exterior to the port door. Thirdly, note that the language of claim 1 requires that the drive for the sensor horizontal-movement mechanism be located on the FOUP side of the port plate. Newly submitted claims 7-12 are believed to further

distinguish the structure of the present invention from that of Bacchi et al.

The rejection of claims 4-6 for obviousness over Bacchi et al further in view of Lane et al is traversed for the reason that these claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 as amended and the citation of Lane et al does not supplement Bacchi et al with regard to the distinctions noted above. Further, it should be noted that Lane et al does not disclose a separate housing for the drive mechanisms and, from a reading of the references, one skilled in the art would not have been motivated to provide such a separate housing, much less to provide means for evacuating same. The prior art does not suggest any need for evacuating the area around the drive mechanisms.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the most recent office action of July 30, 2003 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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